

HECTOR DIAZ

Javier Arizabalo

The beauty of maturity in women: “Cristina”

By **Héctor Díaz** & **Javier Arizabalo**

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Introduction

It is an honor to share the impeccable work of master Javier Arizabalo from a deeply moving perspective: the portrait of maturity and the inexorable, yet beautiful, passage of time.

In this masterful body of work, the focus centers on a single protagonist: Cristina. It is worth noting that this is a very limited series of paintings; however, its excellent technical execution and undeniable emotional depth have made it a milestone. Through the meticulous hyperrealism that characterizes Arizabalo, the canvas becomes a mirror of the soul where the skin and the gaze become maps of an existence rich in experiences.

The impact of these select pieces has resonated strongly in the international art world. Thanks to this masterful amalgam of technique and feeling, one of these works had the privilege of being featured on the cover of the prestigious American magazine *Art Market*.

Likewise, its relevance captured the attention of the prominent Mexican collector Benjamín Fernández, founder of MINART (International Museum of Art), who acquired one of these invaluable paintings for his collection through HECTOR DIAZ.

Throughout the history of art, the figure of the mature woman has been a vehicle to reflect on vulnerability, wisdom, and dignity. Cristina is not just a model; she is a symbol of vitality and resilience that defies any stereotype associated with aging, proving that true aesthetics reside in authenticity.

For the HECTOR DIAZ gallery, it is a true privilege to serve as a bridge so that this level of artistic quality continues to resonate with global audiences.

I invite you to immerse yourselves in the narrative that Javier Arizabalo himself has written about this experience and about the meaning of portraying the older woman in art. His words are the perfect prelude to contemplating paintings that, stripped of any empty idealization, confront us with the striking beauty of experience and remind us that age, far from being a limit, is the most authentic declaration of life.

–Héctor Díaz



Cristina's eye, Mar. 2010, Pastel on Mi-Teintes paper, 65 x 50 cm, "Cristina" Sessions, “Details” Series © Javier Arizabalo



Cristina, Mar. 2010, Oil on Canvas, 73 x 55 cm, “Cristina” Sessions, “Women” Series © Javier Arizabalo

Cristina

I had the opportunity to meet and work with Cristina through a former student.

Despite her advanced age and the health problems she faced, what struck me most was her unbreakable spirit and her openness to the world.

Instead of limiting herself to her familiar surroundings, Cristina embraced technology and stayed active, exchanging information on her computer and participating enthusiastically in all the suggestions made to her.

When posing for the session, Cristina showed immense dignity and grace. Her presence wasn't just an act of posing, but a declaration of life—that age is not a barrier for someone who feels vibrant and curious.

It was a privilege to capture her essence and showcase the strength and serenity that emanated from her.

–Javier Arizabalo

“Women” Series

If the figure of the young woman has been a recurring muse for idealized beauty, the representation of the older woman in art offers a much richer and more complex narrative. Unlike idealization, the portrait of the elderly woman, the grandmother, or the matriarch has historically been a vehicle for exploring themes such as wisdom, experience, dignity, vulnerability, and the inevitable march of time. It's a kind of painting that doesn't seek perfection, but truth.

Historically, the older woman has been portrayed in very specific roles. In the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, she often appeared as a religious figure, such as Saint Anne (Jesus's grandmother) or in scenes of the Holy Family. Her role was secondary but essential, symbolizing piety and tradition.

It was in the Baroque period, with artists like Rembrandt, that the older woman acquired an unusual prominence. In his portraits of elderly women, Rembrandt didn't focus on the richness of their clothes or their social status, but on the depth of their faces. Each wrinkle, each line of expression, was a testament to a life lived. Works like the portrait of his mother or his famous *An Old Woman Seated* are studies of an honesty and compassion that transcended mere physical representation.

In the contemporary context of the works that follow, they are distinguished by an approach that rescues and elevates the dignity of the older woman. As with the portraits of young women, the hyperrealistic technique allows for the capture of every detail of the face and body, but in this case, every detail tells a story.

These portraits of older women are not simply portraits; they are studies of the human experience. The textures of the skin and the gray hairs that frame the face are not marks of decline but seals of a life well-lived. They are represented with an honesty and intimacy that invites the viewer to contemplate the beauty that resides in maturity. The models are not objects of pity but subjects of admiration and respect.

Stripped of any stereotype, the love of a faithful representation gives them a strength that forces us to look beyond the surface and recognize that beauty belongs not to youth, but to life and reality.

–Javier Arizabalo



Cristina lying down, Jan. 2012, Oil on Canvas, 100 x 162 cm, “Cristina” Sessions, “Women” Series © Javier Arizabalo



Eyes, Apr. 2011, Oil on Canvas, 97 x 162 cm, “Cristina” Sessions, “Details” Series © Javier Arizabalo

By: Ariel Su
Media outlet: Art Market
Date: April 2022
Link: https://artmarketmag.com/javier-arizabalo-contemporary-realism-an-exclusive-interview/



By: Héctor Díaz & Javier Arizabalo
Media outlet: Ser Empresario
Date: November 6, 2026
Link: https://www.serempresario.com.mx/la-belleza-de-la-madurez-en-la-mujer-cristina-por-javier-arizabalo/




La belleza de la madurez en la mujer «Cristina»
Una obra de Javier Arizabalo
UNA REFLEXIÓN SOBRE EL ARTE, LA EXPERIENCIA Y LA BELLEZA QUE TRASCIENDE EL TIEMPO
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ARTÍCULO POR HÉCTOR DÍAZ

HECTOR DIAZ

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Cristina, Mar. 2010, Oil on Canvas, 73 x 55 cm
“Cristina” Sessions, “Women” Series © Javier Arizabalo

Back Cover:
Cristina's eye, Mar. 2010, Pastel on Mi-Teintes paper, 65 x 50 cm
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